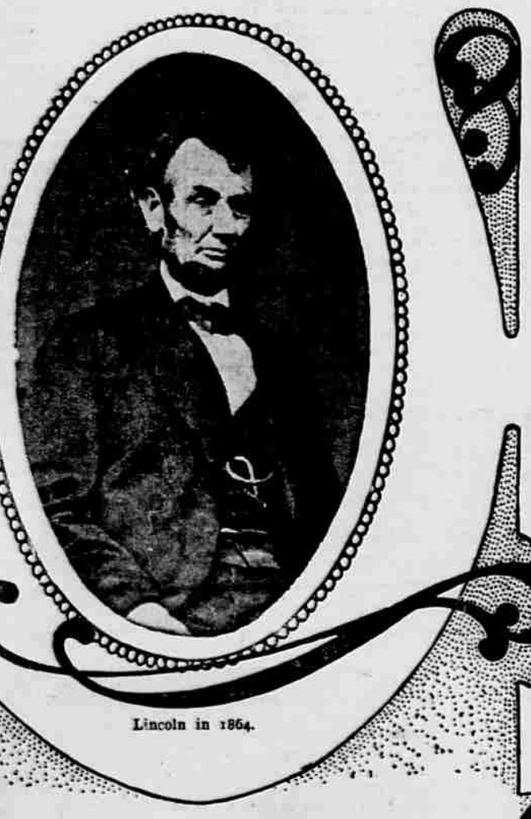
Marvelous Lincoln Collection.



Lincoln in 1864.

One of the Rooms.

Front of the House.

Mr. Oldroyd.

Forty-two Years Have Passed Today Since His First Nomination for President of the United States—Appropriately Enough Washington Contains the Most Extensive Gathering of Mementos and Personal Possessions of the Martyred President

Begun as the Result of One Man's Love and Veneration for the Liberator of the Slaves and Savior of His Country, and Continued and Completed by the Unflagging Efforts of the Same Man—Now It Is Proposed to Open This Shrine of Freedom to the Public, Free.

FORTY-TWO years ago this day Abraham Lincoln was first nominated for President of the United States, and from that day till this the fame of Lincoln has grown and his country's love for him increased.

Into the lives of few men has such deep and exhaustive research been made within so short a period after the subject's end as has been made into the life of Lincoln; and of few lives have so many mementos been garnered.

Senator McMillan's bill for opening free to the public the Lincoln Museum on Tenth Street provides for a long-felt need. The Lincoln memorial collection contained in the plain red brick house opposite the old Ford Theater building is generally conceded to be the most remarkable and complete collection in the world of relics pertaining to one man. The articles are appropriately preserved in the house into which the great war President was carried from the scene of his assassination, and in which he breathed his last on the morning of April 15, 1865.

This house is now owned by the Government, but the collection is the property of Mr. Osborn H. Oldroyd, who has devoted forty-six years of his life to the work. The only distinctive feature of the museum to the passer-by is a sign stating that "Abraham Lincoln died in this house, at twenty-two minutes past seven A. M., April 15, 1865."

It was a lodging house at the time of the tragedy, and one of the lodgers, a young private soldier, whose photograph hangs inside, upon hearing the commotion in the street after the shooting, rushed to the door. The wounded President was just being carried out of the theater, and his bearers, seeing the lighted doorway opposite, quickly took their injured man into the house. The dying man was taken into the room of the young soldier, and laid upon his bed, where he passed away the following morning.

Picture of Death Scene.

There is said to be but one authentic picture of the death scene among the many that have been made; a rather crude wood cut, which was published at the time in an illustrated paper. It was drawn from the description of the young man in whose room Lincoln died, and is to be seen upon the wall. It is noticeable that the wall-paper delineated in this picture is unchanged.

After climbing the steps and ringing the door bell, the visitor is admitted into a hallway, the walls of which are almost completely covered with portraits of Lincoln at various periods of his life, in steel engraving, photograph, and lithograph, 286 in all.

In the front room are some of the most interesting articles in the museum, including a black locust rail split by Abraham Lincoln in 1830, which was taken from the fence around his father's house, as certified by John Hanks and attested by Governor Oglesby in a letter hanging upon the doorpost, dated 1860.

The flag, discolored by time, which draped the Presidential box on the fatal night, hangs in a glass case above the mantelpiece. In the lower part is a long rent made by the assassin's spur (which hangs nearby) as it caught and threw him on the stage, breaking his leg.

Pictures taken from illustrated papers of the time represent every incident in the terrible drama; the stealthy entry of the murderer behind the curtain in the rear of the box; the fatal shot; the general consternation as Booth leaped to the stage and limped away; mounting his horse, his mad ride, and his death in the burning barn by the stealthy shot of Boston Corbett. There are excellent pictures of all who were hanged, imprisoned, or suspected in connection with the lamentable affair, that of Booth showing him as a remarkably handsome man. There is also a lock of the latter's dark hair, cut from his head shortly after death.

The Gettysburg Speech.

In this front room are oil paintings of Lincoln, made in 1842 and 1846; a corrected draft of the immortal Gettysburg speech; pictures of different receptions at the White House, including his last one, and many representations of the great President's birthplace and early life. There is a large photograph of the log cabin built by Lincoln and his father in 1831, on Goose Neck Prairie, near Farrington, Ill., and one of the interior of this cabin; there is also an old spinning-wheel used by Lincoln's mother, which was taken from this old and primitive dwelling. It was in this cabin that Lincoln's father died, in 1851, and in which his mother enjoyed the realization of her hopes of greatness for her son, as she lived there until after his election as President of the United States, and died there during his first term. There are also pictures representing Lincoln's journey from Springfield to Washington prior to his inauguration in 1861; a photograph of Dennis Hanks, son of a brother of Lincoln's mother, Nancy Hanks, who was born May 15, 1799, and who taught the alphabet, reading, writing, and spelling to his cousin Abraham.

Many Valuable Relics.

Inclosed in glass cases are many valuable relics, including autograph letters and cards of Abraham Lincoln; the key of the prison in which the conspirators were incarcerated; a lock of Mrs. Lincoln's hair; original photographs of Mrs. Lincoln and others; pieces of the ropes by which the conspirators were hanged, and many books belonging to the Lincoln family, including the family Bible—over one hundred years old—which Lincoln's mother read to him when a boy, and which bears on its cover the autograph of Abraham Lincoln, written when he was nine years of age.

Many other things of interest and value are in this room, which it would take a long time and much space to adequately describe. In the back parlor there is found an equally interesting medley of relics, including pictures of different kinds. In this room is also an original theater bill of Ford's Theater on the night of the assassination. The play was "Our American Cousin," in which, as presented at Laura Keene's Theater on Broadway, New York, Joseph Jefferson and E. H. Sothern (the elder) were first brought prominently before the public as masters of the dramatic art, the former as Asa Trenchard and the latter as Lord Dundreary. There is also an original photograph of Lincoln's visit to the headquarters of Gen. George B. McClellan after the battle of Antietam.

The room in which Lincoln died is at the end of the entrance hall, and is preserved as it was at the time of his death, excepting that the bed and other furniture and the pictures on the wall have been removed and the room converted into a gallery of pictures representing his death and scenes and incidents connected with his life, and a museum of relics in glass cases.

Among the pictures is a large crayon of the death-bed scene, but, as before stated, the only accurate representation of this solemn incident is the wood-cut published in an illustrated paper at the time. This picture is not as dramatic as the fanciful ones, of which there are scores in the room, the members of the Cabinet being seated around the bed of the dying man, Stanton's burly form a noticeable feature.

In the rear of the room which was the scene of Lincoln's death is the former servants' room, now the library, which contains over one thousand volumes of biography of Lincoln and books relating to the Civil War; five hundred newspapers and three hundred and twenty magazines containing articles relating to Lincoln's life and death; three thousand five hundred newspaper clippings; hundreds of printed and manuscript sermons delivered at the time of the funeral, and many books and pamphlets that belonged to the beloved President; also many touching original letters addressed to or written by Mr. Lincoln, who was never too busy to show his love of the country's soldiers, then battling for the preservation of the nation; his commiseration for the inevitable evils of war, and his fervent hopes and prayers for the speedy advent of peace.

Addition to Building.

Back of the library is a recent addition to the building, which contains the cooking stove last used by the Lincoln family in the homestead at Springfield; a stand made from the sill of the house in which Lincoln lived in 1834, with lines engraved thereon that were written for it by the poet Whittier; a walnut cradle, in which the Lincoln children were rocked, often by the hand of their father; black haircloth sofas and chairs bought by Mr. Lincoln and used by him at the time when he left Springfield for Washington, in 1861; a what-not made from a walnut bedstead presented by Lincoln to a friend in Springfield; a wheel from the family carriage; wooden dining-room chairs; a wooden settee on which Lincoln rested on his porch; his office desk, and his wooden office arm-chair, in which he sat when he wrote his first inaugural address. Here are also statuettes, engravings, and photographs, including Brady's famous photograph of Lincoln, which is considered the best likeness of him at the time immediately preceding his death.

Work of Mr. Oldroyd.

The man whose work of a lifetime has resulted in this wonderfully perfect collection is Osborn H. Oldroyd, a native of Ohio, and the Lincoln Museum is one of the many good things which we owe to the Buckeye State. Mr. Oldroyd served through the Civil War. He removed to Springfield, Ill., the home of the martyred President, with a view to the better prosecution of the work upon which he had set his mind—the collecting of mementos of the great man whom he had set before him as his ideal of a hero. Upon the acquisition of the Lincoln homestead by the State of Illinois as a gift from Hon. Robert T. Lincoln, made at the instance of Mr. Oldroyd, the latter was appointed its custodian, and remained there as such until 1893, when a change of administration led to his removal.

He was invited by the Memorial Association of the District of Columbia to bring his collection to this city, with a view to its purchase by the Government and public exhibition as an eloquent tribute to the martyred President, whose memory it is so desirous to perpetuate. Upon arriving in Washington Mr. Oldroyd found that the association had rented for him the house in which Lincoln died, where, after many necessary repairs had been made, the museum was again established and opened to public view. Congress was induced to make an appropriation for the purchase of the building, with a view to its permanent occupancy by Mr. Oldroyd and the Lincoln Museum, and the provision for the free admission of the public will be the next step in rendering generally available in the Capital of the Nation this remarkable monument to one of the nation's greatest names.

MANY AND WONDERFUL AND VARIED ARE THE PRODUCTS OF OLD KING CORN.

THOMAS Jefferson believed in the adoption of the ear of corn as a national emblem; now, more than ever, seemed it appropriate to employ this symbol as representing a characteristic and valuable feature of American agriculture, for chemical experiment is constantly revealing new uses for this truly golden product.

Sixty years ago corn was only considered fit for the feeding of animals and the production of Bourbon whisky. Today it is the basis of thirty or forty manufactured products, each of which is daily proving a considerable factor in the commercial world. Wheat, oats, and barley, and every other cereal, will soon be relegated each to a comparatively narrow sphere on the market, and the agricultural possibilities of the United States will have reached a stage of development far beyond the dreams of the wildest enthusiast. Within the last few months a company has been organized with $80,000,000 in New York, which is to deal in corn alone, buying the shelled grain and manufacturing and selling its by-products.

The company will consume as much corn as all Europe buys in a small export year, and nearly half as much as Europe uses in a big export year. The annual capacity of the company's factories is estimated at 75,000,000 bushels a week, and all of this immense amount of grain will be utilized in by-products.

From the cornfield are drawn such products as beer, corn oil, starch, sugar, rubber, mucilage, wall paper, soap, ink, salad dressing, and a dozen other materials which enter into the demands of everyday life. Yet it would be difficult, perhaps, to convince the average farmer boy that the product of his labor in the hot summer days is more than feed for cattle and hogs, stuff to be run through a distillery, or the grist of a miller who manufactures cornmeal from which are made the luscious "dodgers." It was nearly forty years ago that the possibilities contained within a grain of corn began to unfold themselves. Thirty years before that time, however, Thomas Kingsford, an English chemist, began to extract starch from corn in New Bergen, N. J. His researches set an example to other chemists, and today practically all the starch used in the United States is made from corn. Thirty years ago little or no glucose was produced in this country, and now the exports alone amount to $8,000,000 or $9,000,000 annually, while the foreign product made from rice, wheat, potato and sago starches cannot compete with the home product.

A kernel of corn is a very simple-looking thing; yet it is composed of four distinct parts—the outer covering, the hull or bran; then the hard, flinty, or glutinous part; then the starch, and last the little white point which extends through the tip and is called the germ.

Of these four parts the germ, about the size of the wheat kernel is the most interesting, and, when profit is considered, the most valuable. Its history is like that of the cotton seed, for only a few years ago it was looked upon as a nuisance and the starch and glucose manufacturers spent money to get rid of it. Machines cracked each grain, the mass was given a bath, and the light germ floated out, while the starch, bran and gluten remained behind.

After it was discovered by the chemists that the despised little germs contained an oil worth more than any other constituent of Indian corn the waste ceased. Now the germs are put under hydraulic pressure of something like two tons to the square inch and the oil is squeezed out of them. The little coats of fiber left become a base for oil cake and go back to the cattle.

Corn oil is of golden color, and so sweet and pure that it often serves as a substitute for olive oil. Unlike other vegetable oil, it will stand for years in any climate or temperature without changing its color of becoming rancid. For a barrel of 280 pounds the manufacturer in Chicago (the greatest grain center in the world) gets about $23, or 6 cents a pound—a neat price for what was thrown away a few years ago.

Corn rubber has all the outward characteristics of India rubber, even to the color. It is made of corn oil squeezed out of the germs. The oil undergoes a sulphur treatment followed by a baking, and an excellent substitute for India rubber is the ultimate result.

A point in favor of corn rubber is that it can be sold for about one-tenth the price of Para rubber, which costs about $1 a pound. Corn rubber can be used in rubber boots, bicycle tires, sheet rubber, water proofing, rubber heels, linoleum—indeed, in nearly all classes of rubber goods. Its most extensive use is probably in machinery, as in packing for valves. The fact that corn oil is not affected by the air again proves of value, for its rubber products resist oxidation, remain pliable and do not crack as do most of the rubber substitutes made from vegetable oils.

In feeding cattle the oil is also used in the form of oil cake, of which it forms about 10 per cent. Little of this is fed to American stock, most of it being exported to Hamburg and Antwerp to be fed to European cattle. Europe is a heavy consumer of oil made from corn, and is every year demanding a larger supply. The first big shipments were made in 1899, when $838,000 worth was sent abroad. The next year the export reached a value of $1,598,000, and last year it was $2,045,000. Vegetable oils enter largely into the manufacture of soft soap, and the Europeans find corn oil the most satisfactory, despite its price of $23 a barrel.

The principal constituent of the corn kernel, so far as regards quantity, is the starch. In order to extract this, the shelled corn is placed in vats, about a thousand bushels of corn to eight thousand gallons of water. In the water is a small proportion of sulphuric acid, just enough to soften the kernel, loosen the glutinous matter, and free the germ. After thirty or forty hours the water is drawn off to be evaporated, so that any of the corn it has absorbed may be recovered. In former years this water was wasted, but now the phosphates and albuminoids in it amount to from one to one and one-half pounds to a bushel of corn that has been soaked. It is then mixed with the by-products which sell as cattle feed.

The mass left behind after the water is drained off is run through mills, taking off the hulls, breaking up the glutinous matter, and freeing the germs. The gluten, starch, and hull are ground fine and passed over silk bolting cloth.

The hull or bran remains on top, but the starch and gluten pass through. The gluten and starch get another bath, and the starch, being the heavier, remains behind. The starch is, by this time, in solid form, and after the last water is dried out the product is ready for the market. In this state it may be used in the laundry, brewery, or confectionery, or sold in the same can with baking powder, but it stands a good chance of staying in the factory and undergoing changes that will make it grape sugar, glucose, or dextrin.

Dextrins are gums or paste. To make a substitute for gum arabic out of starch, it is treated with nitric acid and then backed. As dextrin the starch fixes dyes and colors on fabrics, particularly calico, and also may be used in paper boxes, oilcloth, ink, wallpaper, for gumming envelopes and stamps, or wherever strong, adhesive paste is required.

The greatest single derivatives of cornstarch are glucose and grape sugar. To make these the starch is treated with muriatic acid, and after pressure the acid is neutralized by carbonate of soda. The acid is affixed to the sodium, forming common salt, and every trace of the carbonic acid remaining is carried off. By varying temperature, pressure, and degree of acidity a variety of sugars can be produced. When the acid treatment, or "conversion," is carried to the farthest, grape sugar is the result. When the action is incomplete a thick, colorless sirup, called glucose, is produced. To make a table sirup of glucose 10 per cent of cane sirup, sorghum, or molasses is added.

The grape sugar taken from starch does not resemble cane sugar, for the large amount of water in the corn prevents crystallization or granulation. All the efforts to overcome this defect have failed. About all the water-free sugar is used for now is in the manufacture of wine and beer.

With the main body of starch and the germ of the kernel used, the hull, or bran, and the gluten are left. The gluten is dried in presses, and in its dry state about one-third of it is starch, which the chemists are unable to extract. As gluten meat it is fed to cattle, and mixed with the bran it becomes gluten food. The cobs and husks are left behind for other uses, and the stalks have found their utility as forage.